

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 DRC-01 /095 W

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R 171100Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGUI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5041

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, US

SUBJECT: CAR REACTION TO CHANGE OF US PRESIDENT

1. CAR REACTION TO PRES NIXON'S RESIGNATION AND PRES FORD'S ACCESSION TO POWER WAS MINIMAL AND TARDY DUE TO CUSTOMARY NEWS LAG IN THIS REMOTE AREA AND CAR PREOCCUPATION WITH SUMMIT CONFERENCE ON ORGANIZATION OF COMMON AFRICAN AND MAURITIAN STATES (OCAM) AT BANGUI. CAR'S ONLY STATION, RADIO-TELEVISION CENTRAFRICAINE, DEVOTED PROGRAMMING ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY TO OCAM AND DID NOT CARRY THE STORY FOR SEVERAL DAYS AND THEN ONLY AS A BRIEF, FACTUAL REPORT. ALTHOUGH CAR'S ONLY NEWSPAPER, CENTRAFRIC-PRESS, APPEARED SEVERAL TIMES DURING OCAM CONFERENCE, NO MENTION MADE OF WHITE HOUSE CHANGEOVER. THOSE CENTRAL AFRICANS WHO HEARD THE NEWS PROMPTLY DID SO PRIMARILY ON INTERNATIONAL SHORTWAVE.

2. THERE HAS BEEN NO OFFICIAL REACTION HERE TO RESIGNATION OF PRESIDENT NIXON AND ASSUMPTION OF POWER BY PRESIDENT FORD. HOWEVER INFORMAL COMMENTS REVEAL THAT SOME EDUCATED CENTRAL AFRICANS AND GOCAR OFFICIALS WERE REALLY IMPRESSED THAT THE TRANSFER OF POWER COULD TAKE PLACE SO QUICKLY AND SMOOTHLY.

3. COMMENT: THE DELAYED AND DISINTERESTED REACTION HERE TO RECENT EVENTS IN WASHINGTON REFLECTS IN PART THE GEOGRAPHICAL

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AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ISOLATION OF THE CAR. IT MAY ALSO REFLECT THE MARGINAL NATURE OF US INVOLVEMENT IN THE CAR. WATERGATE

ITSELF GENERATED LITTLE INTEREST HERE AND EVENTS SURROUNDING
RESIGNATION AND OPERATION OF AMERICAN CONSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM
NOT WELL UNDERSTOOD. ONLY GENUINELY LIVELY SHOW OF INTEREST
IN BANGUI WAS AMONG DIPLOMATIC CORPS AND OCAM DELEGATIONS
FROM TEN AFRICAN COUNTRIES.

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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30 JUN 2005

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